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ARTICLE II.

THE DIVINE AND HUMAN NATURES IN CHRIST.

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THE fundamental idea of Christianity is a deed, rather than a doctrine or a law. As a moral force it had its beginning in the faith of Abel. As a historic fact it began in that marvellous birth at Bethlehem, in which God revealed himself to men in man's nature. Any adequate philosophy of Christianity must, therefore, take into account this central fact. It must be able to construe it in all its modes and tenses; its logical and chronological relations; its vital forces, simple and compound, ethical and psychological. But who can thus compass this most stupendous work of God? Who can ascend to its sublime heights, or sound the depths of its wisdom and love?

When we propound the doctrine of man we have a single idea, an identical and finite organism, and in a department where consciousness helps us and experience gives us light. Even when God is our theme the subject, though illimitable, is homogeneous and a unit. But when we come to study the person of Christ our Lord, we pass from the simple to the complex, from the difficult elements of the problem to its more difficult solution. Ideas, not only distinct, but metaphysically opposite, the infinite and the finite, the absolute and the relative, — require to be conciliated in the most wonderful of all unities and agencies.

Just here comes the real "conflict of the ages." Upon this battle-field the contest between faith and false philosophy, reason and revelation, has been sharpest. More and more the opposing forces are drawn towards this centre, where all

¹ *Concio ad Clerum*; delivered at the Commencement of Yale College, July 26, 1864, on the text John i. 1-14.

for the church is to be won or lost. The deniers of miracle and of mystery array themselves more and more gallantly against this greatest of miracles and profoundest of mysteries. Never, perhaps, has the thinking world been more attracted to the founder of Christianity, as the problem of history as well as theology, than in the present age. Germany, that vast mental kaleidoscope, where beliefs and disbeliefs revolve and sparkle with the fascinations of genius, where the philosophies, atheistic and pantheistic, have been employed in coroners' inquests and reputed post-mortem examinations of the Christian religion, and in digging its grave; where the schools, serious and sardonic, have been intent on pulling down the kingdom of heaven, — the land of Luther, notwithstanding these adverse things, has yet, during the last half-century, produced a Christological literature rich in hermeneutical and historical research beyond that of almost any other age or nation.

But, in entering on my subject, I have the fullest conviction that, while the light elicited by these discussions is shining more directly than ever upon him whom we call Saviour and Lord, philosophy cannot interpret for us either him or his mission. Science cannot do it. The life of Christ cannot explain for us the mystery of his person; and only the peculiarity of his person is able to account for the peculiar facts of his life. *He himself is the key to himself*, and to the whole evangelic history, of which he is the central and controlling figure. Christ in the Bible, Christ in the Church, is "the light he gives for us to see by."

The complex idea of the God-man is made up of the separate ideas of God and man. These two factors bespeak, therefore, our careful examination. No essential element of either can be left out of the inquiry without disturbing the process, and no foreign one can be brought into it without prejudicing the result.

I. My first inquiry relates to the Divine Nature in Christ

Let me in the outset free my subject from the incubus of a certain philosophic pre-supposition, that a conception of the

Infinite by the finite is impossible. It is an objection to this assumption, that it forecloses all inquiry, and at the starting-point gives speculative Atheism as the foregone conclusion. It banishes from the province of thought an idea, which, though it may be vague, is yet more positive than any other, and which has determined, and is determining more than all others, the great problems of philosophy and of faith, — the idea of the Infinite. By what force does that which is inconceivable rule over absolutely, and mould our intellectual and religious processes? If God cannot be thought, how can he be revealed or known? And if he cannot be known, how can it be true that this is “eternal life” — to know God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent? We are brought by this supposition to the wail of universal orphanage that sweeps over Atheism and Pantheism as really as over the Christian faith. For if we cannot conceive of the Infinite to affirm his existence, we cannot to deny it, or to affirm that everything is God. If “the idea of personality,” as the Pantheist asserts, “loses all significance beyond the province of the finite,” so, for the same reason, does the idea of being or thing. Does the infinite baffle us here? It baffles us everywhere.

We cannot, it is true, comprehend the Absolute, but we can apprehend him. Incomprehensible and inconceivable are not synonymous. I cannot grasp Mont Blanc in my palms; but I can look on its towering summit from the distance. From its sunny vale and the surrounding peaks I can survey its rugged acclivities and drink in all its grand and glittering beauties. In like manner the infinite-divine is cognizable to the finite-human. For to know the Infinite is not to limit or measure him, but to distinguish him from all that is capable of limitation or measurement.

The significance of the term “Logos,” or “the Word,” must be sought in the drift of the Christian scriptures, of which the first verse of John’s Gospel is an epitome: “In the beginning was the Word.” But what is the beginning (*Ἐν ἀρχῇ*) here referred to? Was it the opening of the old dispensation or of the new? The commencement of the

material cosmos, or of the spiritual creations? It was neither. The Word was in the beginning of all these, and before them, and hence prior to all beginnings. He constituted no part of the creation, for he was its author: "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made."

Every idea of pre-existence in regard to the divine in Christ which is not absolutely beginningless is shut out by this preliminary statement. It announces the absolute eternity of the Word, and thus distinguishes him from all finite beings by an impassable abyss. He who was before all things and all time, must be "without beginning of days or end of years," the alpha and omega, the first and the last.

In the next clause of the same verse the apostle lifts the veil again from the divine nature, and shows this eternal word to be a *distinction* within that nature: "And the Word was with God." This distinction further on in the revelation opens into the *personality* of the Son of God, and gives to Christology the doctrine of the eternal sonship.

This idea of the Logos is older than Philo and Plato, of whom certain critics suppose the apostle borrowed it. Foregleams of the personal distinction in the Godhead appear in the creative fiat: "Let us make man in our image"; also in the theophanies of the Old Testament, as the germ of the incarnation in the New. It is more than the distinction of attribute and subject, of essence and ray. It lies deeper than any mere mode of manifestation or economy. It is a property of the divine nature, a mode of *being*, and a theologic ground of the incarnation and of all the economies. This Word was not a son by creation, as Adam was, nor ethically, by regeneration or adoption, as believers are; but he was *the* Son of the Highest by an immutable distinction in the divine nature — the only begotten, "whose goings forth have been of old," and to whom he saith: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever."

In the correlative idea of Father, this inner distinction is brought out with equal explicitness. There is a veritable

and eternal fatherhood in the Divine, and a true sonship, of which all human paternities are only an image. Finite fathers and sons become such by a law of reproduction and self-distribution. But the infinite Father was always Father, was never sonless, nor the Son fatherless. The divine nature does not admit of reproduction and distribution, as does the human, or of becoming anything or otherwise than it was in eternity.

One sentence more lays open the full content of the term "Logos," as the Divine in Christ: "And the Word was God."

I will not stop to answer those who transpose the subject and the predicate, and read, "God was the Word"; or, because the predicate in the original is without the article, read, "And the Word was a God," — secondary and created. The laws of the language, New Testament and classic, are too unyielding for the purpose of such exegetes, and are now too well understood to require on this occasion a defensive exposition. For eighteen centuries the proem of this Gospel has served for the church the double purpose of a beacon, giving out its steady, guiding light in the darkness through which it has taken its way, and a breakwater, against which the waves of antitrinitarian error have been dashing in vain. The Word, which, as the Son of God, was in the beginning, and was eternally present with God, is also God: "This is the true God and eternal life." The Deity of the Word, implied in the statement of his eternity and personality, is affirmed in this culminating revelation, thus establishing, against heathenism and Judaism, the two fundamental Christian ideas of the Divine Being — *unity of nature* and *personal distinction*.

I take this distinction to be personal, because God has revealed it in forms of language and of action most unequivocally personal and concrete. The terms "Father" and "Son," sender and sent, knowing and known, loving and being loved, indicate interpersonal relations. So also do the pronouns employed in unfolding the distinction. All the modes of presenting it, and all the allusions to it, are strictly personal:

“ I came forth from the Father, and the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth ”; “ As the Father knoweth me, even so knoweth the Father ”; “ O Father, glorify thou me with thyself, with the glory that I had with thee before the world was ”; “ I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. ” Can this be a mere play upon words, an impersonation carried on with elaborate skill through the whole Christian revelation, and yet be most illusory and false just where it seems most real and true ?

I do not claim that the idea of person has the same breadth of meaning in the divine nature as in the human, for that would give us three Gods, instead of the Triune. In the human, it includes the entire and separate entity. In the divine, it is restricted to a peculiar property, *within* the inseparable essence, by which each person is distinguished from the others. The persons are thus limited by the unity, while the unity is ineffably articulated by the persons.

This triune idea of God, to some purely speculative and occult, is in reality most practical and fully revealed. The plan of redemption is based upon it, and moves forward on it in the unity of historic order, and the sublimity of a majestic divine providence. It forms the deep, rich background, on which are laid, with infinite skill, the contrasting colors of fall and redemption, law and gospel, justice and love.

Drop now, for a moment, these ideas of the Deity and personality of the Word, and see into what difficulties, exegetical and historical, it will lead us. How will you, then, conciliate these significant scriptures: “ God manifest in the flesh, ” when it was not the Father, but the Logos — Son, that “ was made flesh ”; “ I and my Father are one, ” when he only who is Son by nature can, without blasphemy, assert himself identical with the Father ? Where will you find the key to the divine side in the life of Christ, without which precisely that is missed which gives to it all its significance and value ? How will you unlock its mystery of miracles, denied by the destructive critics, but explicable on no theory of legerdemain, naturalism, or delegated power ? Why that

affluence of titles, and that opulence of divine ideas contained in them: "Lord of glory"; "Mighty God"; "God over all, blessed for ever"? Whence came that name, "Son," as a co-equal with the Father, in the formula of baptism and the benediction? Whence that exclusive claim to the most tender remembrance in the eucharistical supper, in which there is not a word about God, or an allusion to him, except as the Word which was with God "was God"? What is all this otherwise but a snare for the nations to entrap them in idolatry? How, too, can you explain that peculiar prerogative of Christ, in which lies the whole practical value of his mission — his right to forgive sin, and his call to the weary wayfarer: "Come unto me, and I will give you rest?" This was his calm and constant, but most bitterly contested claim, for in it he made himself "equal with God." His enemies rightly judged that God only can forgive sins. They said for this offence he ought to die, and on this ground based their accusation and joined the issue which ended in his crucifixion. Yet he did not bate a jot from the claim, but held it forth steadfastly to the end. It was verified to himself by the consciousness of his divinity, and to the world by the actuality of sins forgiven.

Thus the doctrine in Christ, by his explicit teachings, consists in the personality and Deity of the Word. These two fundamental points in the Christian system were given to the church by its founder as his own view of himself. For eighteen centuries they have lain in its deep heart as intuitions of faith, most practical and essential to the living unity and scriptural idea of God. "The economical and practical doctrine of the Trinity," says Neander, "constituted from the first the fundamental consciousness of the Christian church."

Two opposing theories, against which the church has defended these articles of its faith, require a brief notice — the Arian and the Sabellian. The one rules out the divinity of Christ, and is essentially deistic. The other denies his personality, and leans strongly to Pantheism.

According to the former, Christ is only a creature, finite and from nothing. Between him and the Godhead the distance is infinite, and no conceivable pre-existence can annihilate or diminish it. He knows not God or himself perfectly, and cannot be relied on as revealing either. The ethical sonship which the theory allows can give to a mere creature no title to be called God, or the Son of God; nor can it bring him into any essentially different relation to God from that in which believers stand to him. It is professedly in the interest of the divine Unity, and in opposition to the Trinity. But the unity which it maintains is ethnic, and not Christian. It is mathematical, not living and moral. It is a rigid, inarticulate uniformity of substance, shut out from the world and man by a remote and lofty absenteeism. Its boasted simplicity is fatal to its claim as a Christian doctrine; for it is simpler than the Trinity only as Deism is simpler than Christianity, as a merely human Saviour is simpler and feebler than our divine-human Lord and Christ. History, which in the long view is the best critic, pronounces it fluctuating and self-contradictory. Now, it presents Christ as a creature, and then, in deference to the scriptures, as a sub-creator. Here, by its philosophy, he is from nothing; there, in its apologetics, he is a derivative God. Theoretically, it opens an impassable gulf between this creature and the Creator. In its evangelic moods it has tried to span the abyss, by throwing half way across it this created Saviour, allowed, in a kind of theologic strategy, as deuterio-divine. In its mutations it has never taken any strong hold of a truly Christian consciousness, or for any length of time held a prominent place in the church. It comes in as a disturbing element when the faith-principle languishes, and speculation rules. It is cast out when faith revives and philosophy is baptized at the altar of Christian, instead of Deistic, science. Practically it lacks depth and power, because its Christ has no proper divinity.

The Sabellian view, by its denial of the personality of the Logos—Son, claims to be in the interests of the same Unity.

It allows a modal distinction in the Divine Being, as hidden and revealed, as silent and speaking, God *in* himself, and God *out* of himself, but not an immanent and real one. A favorite illustration of this distinction is, "Brahma sleeping, and Brahma waking," or actionless and active. Prior to his creative work God dwells in undisturbed silence, "sleeping on eternity." He is reasonless and motionless, without thought, consciousness, reflection, or memory. From the capacity of self-revelation in his waking hour came forth the Father, Son, and Spirit, with stars, suns, and trees as finite revealing *media*. By means of these, alike finite and instrumental, the Absolute dramatizes himself before himself on the plain of the finite. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as *dramatis personae*, take the leading parts, and the stars, trees, flowers, and man, the subordinate. All are alike implemental, all equally finite and phenomenal. There is no difficulty in a trinity of such finite impersonations. Nor, on the same principle, is there in a multiplicity of them. But in thus reducing the Father and Son to finite, dramatic impersonations, the theory denies a truly divine in Christ, and leans towards Deism. And in affirming these impersonations to be outgoings of the Absolute, and therefore one in essence with it, it runs in the opposite direction into Pantheism — the identity of God and the world — as its logical climax. The scheme, in this latter phase, shows an extraordinary boldness of speculative adventure, and an immense generalization. Its pathway down the ages lies through the Pagan polytheisms of the pre-Christian period and the insurrectionary philosophies and disbeliefs of later times. In some of its recent Germanic forms it exhibits great metaphysic subtilty and dialectic skill, and, as a system of mental gymnastics, is not without its use. But for a specific and permanent incarnation, in either aspect, Sabellianism has no need, and allows no room. The Logos, at best, is only a spark of divinity magically finited, and the incarnation its temporary twinkle on the Judean hills, when it throws off its shadowy human, and falls back into its native abyss of substance and silence.

Dorner calls it "the medium between Deism and Pantheism, dazzling but shallow."

The doctrine of the Bible and the church stands between these errors, in the truths which they both affirm and deny, with none of their self-contradictions or vacillations. It neither reduces the unity of God to a dead uniformity, nor confounds him with man and the universe. There is identity of substance, and also personal distinction. The Being is one, the persons three, and without contradiction or confusion. The one Being is not three beings, but one; nor are the three persons one person in the same sense that they are three. The Father is not the Son, nor the Son the Spirit, nor the Spirit the Father, yet each is God, and together make up the eternal self-consciousness and blessedness of the absolute Divine.

The problem of the divine and human in Christ falls back, therefore, for solution upon the prior problem of the divine. The one was not and could not be scientifically solved until the other had been. The Incarnation of God, and the Trinity stand or fall together. A doctrine which is most metaphysical is here seen to hold the closest connection with the great fundamental and practical fact in Christianity. The tri-personal unity finds its most luminous revelation and proof in the incarnation of God; and the church now holds and has ever held it in this vital form, through its faith in a veritable divine-human Saviour.

Eighteen centuries of critical discussion, believing, unbelieving, and disbelieving, have made it evident that there is no escape from a deistic humanitarianism on the one hand, or a nebulous pantheism on the other, except in the Christian conception of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. All movement from this central idea is towards one or the other of these anti-Christian extremes. In all the Christian ages this has stood between a dead Judaism and a deader heathenism; between a sciolistic naturalism and a theosophic spiritism; between the positive philosophies and the negative; the "broad churches" and the narrow. It has repeatedly fought

with, and conquered, them all, and is advancing, through agonisms and antagonisms, to a final victory.¹

The defence of the Trinity, as the basis of incarnation, has served the double purpose to the church of sharpening its intellect, of ripening and enriching its practical judgment, and of making it acquainted with the self-repeating and contradictory nature of all fundamental errors. The very heresies against which it has maintained the divinity of Christ have been often overruled as wholesome retarding or accelerating forces, by the emphasis of some half-truth which the decline of church-life was suffering to escape, or was leaving in the background, and which it has been thus roused to seize anew, and incorporate into the unities and vitalities of the system. In her successive contests, the church has taken a manlier grasp of just the weapons by which her enemies are sure to be won over to this truth, or to be worsted. More and more she lays hold on a power which is appropriating to its sublime ends all the advancements in art, science, and philosophy, which draws truth from all departments, freshly and livingly, to the divine in Christ, as the source and centre of all.

II. I pass now to the second part of my subject — the human nature of Christ — contained in the term “flesh.”

In its restricted use *σάρξ*, translated flesh, denotes one of the constituents of the bodily organization. But in a comprehensive biblical sense it expresses sometimes the condition of the race as depraved, and sometimes the rational and

¹ “It is becoming ever more universally discerned that all the essential determinations of the conception of God must be settled in the light and under the influence of the doctrine of the Trinity. So also is the conviction becoming every day more general that, for Christology, the matter of prime consequence is to conceive the divine in Christ in the absolute, the highest, that is, in the personal form, and that the divine in Christ is to be distinguished both from the divine in the world and the divine in believers.” “We can affirm that the pantheistic, no less than the deistic, contradiction to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity has been, as to principle, overcome for the evangelical church.” — *History of the Development of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ*. By Dr. J. A. Dorner. Vol. iii. pp. 229, 231.

corporeal natures conjoined. This last I understand to be its use in the text, to express *the entire humanity* of Christ, a true body and a reasonable soul.

That the human nature of Christ included a true body is so evident that few, except some of the old Gnostics, have ever denied it. But that he possessed a reasonable soul, a real and complete humanity, is a proposition that meets with more objection and dissent.

As rationality constitutes the essence of the human nature, the question is simply one of Christ's finite *rational* existence. And it is to be determined by his own testimony and that of the apostles, as we determined the question of his divine nature. What, then, is the testimony?

1. Jesus was the *son of Mary* :

He recognized her as his mother; not the mother of an abridged, but of a complete human nature. There is no intimation in the history that he was a soulless, half son, or she the mother of a mere shred or shell of humanity. That the conception was supernatural does not indicate that it was incomplete. The son of Mary, according to the evidence, was as completely human as the son of Elizabeth.

2. Jesus was the *son of man* :

This was his most familiar designation of himself. It is as "the son of man" that he "hath not where to lay his head," that he must "suffer many things and be put to death," and must finally "sit on the throne of his glory." This human sonship enters into his entire work as a mediator, and runs through his whole history.

It was the paradox of the two sonships conjoined, the human and divine, that so staggered the wise men of his time, who "by wisdom knew not God"; yet he fearlessly propounded it to friend and foe. He pushed it to the very front of his claims, and held it as essential to the explanation of his person, and the true idea of his work.

3. Jesus was a *man* :

The one Mediator between God and man is "the man Christ Jesus." "As by man came death, by man came also

the resurrection from the dead." "For, if through the offence of one, many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many." The argument of the apostle, so clear and conclusive, rests on the fact that the humanity of the Mediator is identical with that of the race, that the second Adam, who conquers death, is of the same finite nature with the first Adam, by whom it came into the world. The work of redemption proceeds, logically and historically, upon this identity.

Now, is it possible that a soulless *form* of man can answer to the fulness of this testimony? Can it explain the completeness of the human in the life of Christ, and meet the exigencies of his mediatorial work? Have not the terms "man," and "son of man," a well-defined use to express a veritable and complete humanity? And would our Lord and his apostles turn them from this use in plain didactic discourse, thus misleading, for eighteen centuries, his studious and loving followers? Nor do I admit that their language is so ambiguous that we cannot know whether Jesus was a man in reality, or one only by a figure of speech. Christ was not a Delphic priest, nor are his teachings dark and Pythonic sayings. It was his avowed object to reveal himself so fully to the world that there should be no more doubt as to his humanity than in respect to his divinity. For this purpose his language is the fittest possible, — most simple, emphatic, and exact. It is a perfectly open vehicle of thought, in which the wealth of these divine ideas lies all uncovered. And when he proclaims himself the son of Mary and of man we must understand a real and finite humanity to make one part of his self-revelation, as from the term "God" and "Son of God," we do the true divinity to be another part.

The evidence of his humanity is not less explicit from the life of Christ than from this testimony — his growth, temptations, and sufferings. His physical nature, like that of other children, was immature at his birth. So also were his intellectual and moral powers. He was born as other children

are ; and grew as they grow, in stature and strength, as well as in wisdom. He had a child's mind, as well as body. Both were symmetrical and beautifully perfect in every stage of his progress, through childhood on to ripe manhood. No violence was done to the human rationality by the divine. There were no ruptures in the development. Though it may have been preternaturally rapid, there was in it no forcing of the child's will, or of the man's. The wisdom in which, as man, he increased, was limited, yet it was sufficient in every emergency for the purpose of the divinity that shaped his ends.

He was also "tempted in all points like as we are," and "he learned obedience by the things that he suffered." But temptation, strictly speaking, is predicable only of the finite rationality. The purely divine is not temptable, either in the sense of enticement to sin or of learning obedience by suffering. Neither is the animal organism of man. It has no consciousness of law as a moral rule, or of love, and is incapable of either transgression or allurement to it. Duty is ethical and personal. So are temptation and sin. Hence, the temptations of our Lord to distrust his Father's care in the wilderness and the garden, to yield his purpose of sublime love, and submit to the ruling evil of the world, were genuine human experiences, in which his strong but tenderly sensitive nature was set upon by all the unrestrained powers of darkness. What else could they have been? And he saw, in these assaults, more clearly than any other man ever saw all the incentives to evil. He conceded their force; he felt them to his heart's core. But he withstood them all; he steadily confronted and defeated them all.

But how acute were his sufferings! "Now is my soul sorrowful." "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straightened till it be accomplished." But it was neither a superhuman nor a brute anguish that he endured. It must have been a sorrow of the intelligent, conscious spirit, either the human or the divine, that forced the cry "My

God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and the prayer, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." Which was it? What could it be, but that same *πνεῦμα*, the essence of human rationality, which from the cross he "yielded up," and breathed into the keeping of his Father? Could the infinite Spirit give up itself to itself; or breathe itself out of itself; or in any way be separated from itself? If not, these last words of the divine man, uttered in the agonies of the crucifixion, must stand as the culminating proof of his genuine and complete humanity.

The theory of divine sorrow, should it be admitted, makes nothing against this evidence of a veritable human nature and human sorrow. For if the divine in Christ could suffer, much more could the human. But the theory is not admitted. I do not find it in reason or revelation, in faith or any sound philosophy. It is not in the scriptures, explicitly or by implication, any more than it is that God hungered and ate, was weary and slept, was crucified and died. Nor is it a necessary deduction from the compassionate tenderness of the Divine Being. Yet it is maintained, "we are not to conclude that only the human can suffer," that "no pang can touch the divine nature." We speak of God as displeased; and "this displeased state of course, is a painful state."¹

¹ God in Christ. By Dr. Bushnell. In his late volume, "Christ and his Salvation," Dr. Bushnell advances to a more positive inculcation of the doctrine of divine sorrow. "Is there any sensibility in God," he asks, "that can suffer? Is he ever wrenched by suffering? Nothing is more certain. He would not be good, having evil in his dominions, without suffering, even according to his goodness." Then as his goodness is infinite, his sufferings also must be infinite, and this, too, from the first incoming of evil into his dominions. "His love sharpens into a pain when it looks upon evil." It "becomes an agony, in that it is a love to transgressors." Since the fall of the angels, it follows, then, that this agony has been unceasing, and must continue forever, in that God will be always looking on evil and transgressors. God's "dislikes, disgusts, indignations, etc. are mingling and commingling as cups of gall for the pure good feeling of his breast." "And here precisely is the stress of the cross." Nature had no power to "express this moral pain of God's heart, though the ancient providential history was trying vainly to elaborate the same. Nothing could ever express it but the physical suffering of Jesus." "Here is the precise relation of the agony of the cross." The burden, the mental and moral pain, of the cross is

But since suffering, as a painful state, implies mutability and dependence, we must conclude that it cannot touch the Immutable and Absolute, that the finite and dependent only are subject to it. Human anger may be painful, but God's displeasure, which is his disapprobation of evil, is not human. It is a painless element of his infinite holiness and blessedness, from which there can be neither subtraction nor diminution. Else his hatred of sin must be the occasion of an unmitigated misery, and the most holy, as being the most sensitive, would be the most unhappy. The theory has recently culminated in the impossibility of an unmingled divine happiness. "The highest enjoyment," says a late writer, "always involves an element of pain as the condition of its being," God's cup of felicity is not pure, but "is mingled with drops of bitterness." The God over all, blessed forever, is not, then, entirely happy. He is subject to evil. His felicity is marred by bitterness, through a necessity of his nature. The pain is organic and chronic, for which there is no relief. And, as a recommendation, it is claimed that this view brings us nearer to God, assures us more of his sympathy, and is adapted to soften the heart and lead us to repentance. It may be adapted to awaken our commiseration that God should suffer so much; but, as this pain is a condition of his "highest enjoyment," I see in it no element of conviction, or occasion for repentance. Even our pity finds some relief in the fact that this pain "does not obliterate" God's felicity. And as it is a condition of his highest enjoyment, there are no motives for us to remove or lessen it, if either were possible;

God's, the "wrenching" of the Deity, the "gall" in his breast; the physical suffering, the animal pain which gives it expression, this is man's. Although it is maintained that these agonies make many subtractions from the divine blessedness, it is not allowed that they cause any diminution of it, since God's consciousness of suffering brings with it a compensation, which fully repays the loss. The essential defect in this theory of Christ, is the exclusion of the rational human. Hence, as in all one-nature theories, comes the attempt to make the divine supply its place, and hence comes also the loss of a really God-man Redeemer. The doctrine of loss and gain may be appropriate to finite natures, but not, we think, to the Infinite.

“ Dare I say
 Creator, Thou art feebler than thy work ;
 Thou art sadder than thy creature ? ”

In respect to God's sympathy, how does it appear that it is conditioned on his being subject to suffering any more than to sin? Strictly speaking, God has no sympathy, no fellow-feeling, with the wicked, and can have none—the All-holy with the unholy. How could the Crucified sympathize with his crucifiers; or feel other than moral disgust and repulsion? Yet precisely here, in this utter absence of sympathy with the wicked, is the marvel of God's mercy. It is the nature of love to desire to relieve suffering; but it does not follow that it must share, in order to relieve, it. It is not necessary to success in surgery that the operator should experience the pains of amputation, or in ministering to “ a mind diseased ” that we should become subject to the glooms of melancholy or the horrors of remorse. Moral and physical suffering in the human organism are not identical. The gout is not the same as a grief of heart, nor does the mind have the tooth-ache, the asthma, or a fever when the nerves report these ills to it. No more was the Divine in Christ necessarily cast into agony by the pains of the human nature with which it was united.

Would it not, on this theory, bring God nearer to us to suppose that he sinned as well as suffered with us? Would not this seem a still greater condescension? Oh no! you say, this would bring him too near, and make him too much like ourselves. So does the idea of divine bitterness, agonies, and pangs. It reduces the Absolute to the mutable and dependent, and imports a finite feebleness into the Omnipotent. It destroys God's self-consistency, and subtracts from his infinite blessedness. It shakes our faith in the stability of his government, to be told that he can have no pure and perfect joy that does not root itself in some deep sorrow; that his tranquility is disturbed, his nature wrenched by the evil which he permits; that he fluctuates from pleasure to pain, from blessedness to bitterness.

And what is the ethical necessity which demands this Apollinarian dogma? The reality of divine sympathy, which it is supposed cannot be realized through the sufferings of the human nature. But it is just this sympathy which the regenerate secure through Christ's human soul, which was made a perfect medium of communication through suffering, and more fully than would be possible through a mere body of opaque, passionless matter.¹ Through the refined, sympathetic, human intelligence of Jesus, God has the most perfect fellow-feeling everywhere with the strugglers after truth and holiness, humanizing thereby his love, and making it responsive to every pang they feel, and every prayer for help they utter, — a love not a whit less divine for coming to them through the victorious struggles of a complete and glorified human nature.

The exigencies of Christ's work, which required in him an example of virtue, also demand a full humanity. Matter can be wrought into exquisite forms and models of art, — has been divinely organized into the matchless beauty of the human body. But no art can make of it an example of virtue. Nor is the physical in man, the mere animal life, capable of the moral qualities indispensable to an example of truth and piety. All the elements of Christ's perfect character existed in matchless harmony and beauty in the Supreme before the incarnation. But they were no proper example for fallen man. They were unappreciable; too lofty and distant for his imitation. They needed to be brought down and softened, and made to live and breathe again in the very humanity from which they were lost. Then, a new moral power was added to the world's recovering influences, in him who thus became "the first-born among many brethren."

If, now, against all this evidence, external and internal, exegetical and historical, we must conclude that the finite-

¹ "Deitas autem nec absque corpore patiente passionem unquam admittit, nec absque anima dolente et perturbata, perturbationem et dolorem exhibet; neque absque mente anxia et orante anxia est aut orat." — Athanasius contra Apollinarianum, p. 950.

rational was wanting in Jesus, what proof can we rely on that the same was not wanting in John and Paul, in Napoleon and Alexander? Did the consciousness of these men prove to them the completeness of their human nature? So did the consciousness of Jesus prove to him the completeness of his. Do their contemporaries bear testimony to their humanity? His bear an equally explicit testimony to his humanity. Were the apostles deceived in respect to his human nature? Why may they not have been in regard to his divine? And if *his* consciousness fails us here, and with it *their* testimony, in what can we trust? We are bewildered. First principles fail us. How can we be sure that we are not spectres, and that all around us is not spectral?

If God was not incarnate in a real humanity, in a living and rational Christ, but only in a soulless, empty body, — of all we feel or fear, hope or suffer, there was in him we take to our hearts as Redeemer and Friend absolutely nothing. Between him and me the chasm is infinite, and still unbridged. To the High and Lofty One there are no steps for my feet to ascend. Of my responsible, immortal human, the Son of God took nothing, felt nothing, touched nothing. My God he is, my Judge; but not my Mediator — the man Christ-Jesus.

In respect to the *origin* of our Lord's humanity, it has been explained sometimes by emanation, sometimes by immediate creation, but commonly by procreation, or derivation from the father of the race.

According to the first view the human soul is a particle of the divine, and in substance identical with it. This precludes the possibility of a special incarnation, and makes the human of Christ and of every other man, in its essence, one with the Divine. The view held by the mystic theologians is deeply tinged with this pantheistic error, and the entire system of the Swedish seer is constructed upon it; — "God is very man," "the only man," and is virtually incarnate in every human being. As to his inner life, every man is God; and as to his external, he is a form in which God finites himself, and through which he sees, thinks, and acts.

A few in almost every period have been attracted by this unitary philosophy, as an improvement upon Christian theism. They fancy it more spiritual and profound, while the history of human opinions shows it to be just the opposite. It seems to them warmer, to bring them nearer to God, and to make them pneumatic and divine. Sometimes it produces of its votaries, seers and revelators, and now and then a new Christ, a new Comforter, or a "new church." It projects its wishes into the future, and calls them prophecy, and converts its desires into dogmas, and gives them out as gospels. Now, it mends up the old Bible, and now, makes a new one. Full of great expectations, it is always on the eve of anticipated triumph — of a glorious universality.

"It is necessary to my comfort," says one of this class, "that I should feel myself a part of God." "The difference between God and man," writes another, "is simply that between the greater and the less." A recent writer in one of our most popular quarterlies pronounces the theory of two natures in Christ "clumsy," affirming the divine and human to be one "identical nature," and man "God's brother by sameness of nature."

Here the theistic and pantheistic philosophies stand directly confronting each other. A distinction of nature, in kind and not in degree merely, between the divine and human, is a first principle of Christian theism, as its denial is of pantheism. Without this distinction, faith and worship are lost for man in the identity of the worshipper and the worshipped. "The ultimate struggle," says Amand Saintes, the acute biographer of Spinoza, is not between Christianity and philosophy, but between Christianity and Spinozism, its most inveterate antagonist.

The *creative* theory supposes the soul of Christ to be an immediate production out of nothing, which is, therefore, isolated from the Adamic race, except by a merely somatic link. No law of reproduction or continuity of rational existence connects him with the human species. He stands alone, entirely outside of the ethical and historical of the race.

The fallen creature is not in any sense, restored in him, but a new creation breaks upon the world. The model-man is not the lost image of God recovered, but a new mould is made, and impressions afterwards, in redemption, taken from that.

The common view, holding an organic unity of the race, and of Jesus with the race, by derivation from its common head, escapes this isolation of Christ, on the one hand, and the identity of the two natures on the other. It is not quite the creativeism of Hylary, nor the traducienism of Tertullian, but a combination of elements from them both. It rests on the divine testimony, confirmed by natural science, that God introduced the human family by immediate creation, and continues it by procreation. "God gives souls," says Augustine, "through the medium of natural descent." On this law, the species has a historical development, as well as natural unity. Humanity is neither a vast generic person nor a chaos of personalities, but a divinely articulated organism of distinct, responsible, and, if I may so express it, consanguineous souls. It is a human race and family, not atomic, nor automatic, but originally theocratic and theocentric. The miraculous conception of Jesus strikes down into, and works through, this law of natural descent. Mary was the mother of a complete human nature in her son, as really, though not in the same way, as God is the father of the entire divine nature in his Son. The manifest Divinity does not conflict with the evidence of the humanity. Each is established by its own separate and sufficient proof. Neither can be assumed as incompatible with the other, or unnecessary. "The author of our salvation," says Calvin, "is descended from Adam, the common parent of all." Luther taught that Christ took upon himself the full nature of man in its state of abasement, and under the condition of dying. And the new humanity which Christ introduced was not a new essence of nature, but a new moral status, an ethical, not a substantial re-creation.

Here a difficulty meets us which will introduce another

feature of Christ's humanity, namely, its sinlessness.¹ If his human nature was complete, and derived from fallen Adam, must he not have inherited with the infirmities of the nature its sinfulness also? It is, in part, to escape this difficulty that some assume for the human of Christ a newly created soul; and others, denying to him a human rationality, and allowing only a divine, turn the doctrine of Christ's sinlessness into the truism that God is not a sinner.

Starting from the same pre-supposition, the impossibility of a sinless birth in the sinful family of man, the pantheistic philosophers affirm a natural oppugnancy between the human and the divine in Christ. The human spirit "in its first form," "as finitely constituted," is natural and evil, "in discord with itself and with God." And as Christ took upon himself human finitude, he took this discord with it. "In his inner self," remarks Strauss, "which was God, he was sinless; but the historical appearance cannot have been pure." He could not "withdraw himself from the need of purification more than other men." Although the hinderances to good in his life were reduced to a vanishing medium, "his proximate sinlessness was only a sinfulness done away."

The life of Jesus has been twice written during the present century from this speculative point of view — thirty years ago by a stalwart German, and recently by a fantastic Frenchman. Each starts with the postulate of pantheism, — that the supernatural is unhistorical, and a miracle impossible. What can such men know of a person and a history of which miracle is the grand peculiarity? Testimony is nothing with them. Facts are nothing. Philosophy, fancy, is everthing. Yet both stirred the church to its centre, Romish and Protestant, calling out the ablest defenders. The latter drapes his deep hostility to the Christian faith in the rustling folds of a fascinating naturalism. He eulogizes Jesus as a beautiful young moralist, a genius, a hero; and then defames him as

¹ "Sed obicitis: Si omnia accepit, sane et humanas cogitationes habuit; impossibile autem est, humanis cogitationibus non inesse peccatum; quomodo igitur Christus absque peccato erit?" — Athanasius contra Apollinarianum, p. 944.

a sombre giant and a deceiver, who accepted the Utopias of his time and race. He holds him up as a model that can never be replaced by a superior, yet declares his reasonings, tried by the logic of the Stagyrice, weak and insipid. "Time has changed the power of the great Founder," he says, in a simulated tearfulness, "into something very grievous to us; for when the worship of Jesus grows feeble in the heart of humanity, it will be because of the very acts which made men believe in him." Thus this French romancer kisses the world's great benefactor, and then betrays him into the hands of his enemies. He first crowns and then crucifies him; almost deifies, and then meanly assassinates, him whom the best adore and the purest love.

So inveterately hostile are all the phases of the one-substance philosophy to the sinlessness of Jesus, — a most vital point in the Christian faith, on which there can be neither surrender, concealment, nor compromise. It is this sinless human that distinguishes the Messiah from all other founders of religion and all other men, and that makes him the example of virtue which we need. Without this there could be no true sacrifice, no atonement. Only the just could suffer vicariously for the unjust. Hence the explicitness of the scriptures. It is as a logical necessity of Christianity that he was the "holy child," "the Holy One and the Just," "who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth," that he did always those things which pleased, the Father, and was able to say "Which of you convinceth me of sin?"

No, finitude is not an evil, nor is sin a necessary quality of the finite. Holiness is man's normal state, the original law of his being. It is God's image in which he was finitely constituted. Sin is a rupture of his moral nature, a disorder, and a disaster. Therefore it was possible for God to take hold of the fallen nature without taking the fall. He who made that nature could mend it, could restore the broken image to its original coloring and beauty, and reset it in the same material frame.¹ Whether Jesus was unable to sin, or

¹ "Nam si sol quem ille fecit et nos contuemur, dum in caelo volvitur, terres-

merely able not to sin, is a question on which some differ who are agreed that he did not sin. To say that he was able not to sin, and did not, is an inadequate statement. It is no more than was true of Adam before the fall. It expresses only the human side of his character. But taking into account the divine, as the dominating force, a moral inability to sin is essential to the whole truth. We may say he was able to sin if he willed to; but considering that his whole moral being was strongly set against it, and that it was the purpose of God to destroy sin in the world through sinlessness in him, we are obliged to say, in justice to his divine-human person, he could not will to sin. Yet not by physical restraint or force, but in the freedom of his holy nature, and in the bias of his whole being towards God. The inner man unfolded by a free, divine-human impulse, in spotless purity and perfect self-harmony — the affections with the appetites, the imagination with the reason, the will with the understanding.

From the very starting-point of Christ's existence, where the divine first touches the human germ, and bias to evil became possible, the stain of the fall was carefully warded off. In his entire human there was no defect or redundancy. Rectification or amendment was not needed, and was impossible. Addition would have disfigured, and alteration marred it. The closer our approach to it in our devout contemplations, the more it draws and subdues us. Nearness, which dispels the enchantment that distance lends to most characters, enchains us to his. It is the most real and truest human life, the most pure, and most free, after no model, yet "the original of all time," the determining centre of all true humanity and the starting-point of moral progress. The loftiest aspirations can desire nothing more exalted to strive

tria corpora attingendo non maculatur, nec tenebris obscuratur, sed potius cuncta ipse illuminat et purgat; multo magis sanctissimum Dei Verbum solis effector et dominus, cum se in corpore cognoscendum praebebat, inde non inquinabatur; sed potius ipse corruptionis expertus, corpori mortali vitam et munditiam conferebat, qui peccatum, inquit, non fecit, nec inventus est dolus in ore ejus." — Athanasius de Incarnatione Verbi Dei, p. 62.

after, nor does the humblest struggler in the conflicts of life need anything more sympathetic and tender. No pang of regret ever troubled him, and no prayer for pardon escaped him. How is this? Was that eye so clear to sin in others blind or blurred to it in himself,—that spirit, so sensitive to evil at the circumference, apathetic to it at the centre? Oh no! Jesus is the spotless and the holy; the world's tempted and sinless One, grappling with sin for, and in the place of, the sinner. He suffers evil, but in a way to subdue the prince of evil. In bearing sin, he destroys it. By yielding, he conquers; and in giving himself for the world, he saves it.

Thus the life of Jesus demonstrates his complete Adamic and his sinless humanity. Behold the man in whom virtue finds its unity and totality, and the world, the universal morality, august yet winning, breathing an eternal beauty, but refreshing to the faint and the feeblest. What a combination of work and worship, of self-denial and self-affirmation,—a teacher whose life is his doctrine, an example in which all duties, delights, and denials mingle in heavenly harmony! What is such a man? What can he be, but “the man Christ Jesus,” “the Mediator between God and man”?

But the most difficult part of my subject remains to be considered. How do these two natures, the divine and human, stand related in Christ? In what sense was the Word made flesh in him?

The answer is more than intimated by the separate ideas of God and man which his life shows to be indispensable to his work and person. The Word was made flesh *by the vital union of the two natures in the one divine-human Christ and Saviour*. This union is not a speculation, or a philosophy of Christianity, but its accomplished and central fact. It is not a mode of explaining the incarnation, but the incarnation (*ἐσαρκωσις*) itself, the personal and permanent entrance of God into the human nature for its redemption. So it stands in the evangelic narratives, and in the faith of the saints, broadly distinguished from diverse theories which have been

mistaken for it, but which it excludes from the category of Christian doctrine.

Let me allude to a few of these excluded theories.

1. The *identity* of the two natures. According to this view, the terms "human" and "divine," "God" and "man," are interchangeable and synonymous. It allows neither faith nor philosophy, for there can be no communion or relatedness where there is no distinction; and no possibility in what is identical of being made anything other than it is in its own unchangeable sameness.

2. The *conversion* of the divine nature into the human. For the Word to be made flesh, on this theory, is the same as for the divine nature, by transubstantiation, to become the human. "Jehovah became Jesus," says an essayist, writing in behalf of this transmutation dogma, "and is, therefore, the human soul." God fell away from his own infinite nature in the incarnation, and became finite. He is shut out from his attributes; his knowledge is obliterated, and all ability to re-acquire it lost, except through the bodily organs of the soulless Jesus, to which he is restricted.¹

How preposterous the idea of such a fall of the Divine; such a disintegration and dissolution of the Infinite! Can the human mind even be so shut out from its faculties, and in such an absolute dependence on a merely physical organism? Has it no pure intellections, or exclusively intellectual functions? Do our thoughts never go farther nor faster than the powers of bodily locomotion carry them? And the reason, — does it get nothing from God, or concerning him of law, liberty, and immortality, except through sensation? Much less, then, can the limitless Divine mind be so rent from its attributes — the Godhead so cramped and imprisoned in the darkness and emptiness of man's mortal tenement. To what an orphanage would the universe be subjected in such a bereavement of its Ruler! The conception is gross and heathenish. It is a disturbance to all Christian

¹ "Nec divinitatis mutationem, sed humanitatis innovationem arbitrio suo effecit." — Athanasius contra Apollinarium, p. 943.

sensibilities, and it falls out from the circle of Christian thought, by the gravity of its essential error, almost as soon as it comes in.

3. The *transmutation* of the human into the divine. This is the converse of the explanation just referred to. Both are drawn out on the same pantheistic background, and are set aside by the same class of objections. In the exuberant rhetoric of his gratitude, Augustine exclaims, "God became man, that man might become God." But it is as impossible to change man into God as God into man. Finitude and creatural dependence are as indispensable to manhood as infinitude and independence are to the Godhead. God can create finite beings, but not an infinite one. He *is*, but is not created or capable of being created. Unless the infinite can produce another infinite, which is an absurdity, and could produce him out of the finite, the deification of the human in Christ is an absolute impossibility. What would such another God be but a fabricated deity, a finite Infinite?

Christ's human nature was, indeed, perfected by the action of the divine upon, and in it. It was glorified. But this was only its completeness, its perfection as human, not its deification or dissolution. The fire which separates the silver from the dross in the furnace, penetrates, pervades, and melts it, but does not change its metallic nature. The human soul is in the most vital connection, the most mysterious interaction with the body, impelling and regulating all its motions; but there is no conversion of matter into mind, nor the least approach to it. Faintly thus may be shadowed the influence of the divine upon the human in Christ. It takes hold of it, raises it up, unfolds, illumines, invigorates, and completes, but does not change its substance. It is human still, and must remain so forever, — God's idea of man realized in man's Redeemer.

4. The *mixture* of the two natures in a third nature, neither human nor divine.

As a theory of the divine-human in Christ, this encounters the objections which are fatal to all transmutation schemes.

A conversion of the divine into the human, or of the human into the divine, is no more within the limits of possibility than their entire change. God can as easily throw off his whole nature as half of it, and make an entire God out of a creature as a part of one.

The doctrine of degrees, discrete or simultaneous, employed by the pantheistic explainers of incarnation, is wholly incompatible with the Christian ideas of the God-man. For God cannot be more or less infinite. The Absolute does not admit of comparison, neither can man be more or less finite and created. The two natures can never approach and mingle in a third, which is neither one nor the other, though they can be united. The supposition allows to Christ no proper divinity or humanity. The divine Word is not a real person, but an impersonation. And the human being without rationality is equally *thing-like* and theatric. In the play of the parts it is represented as an external person, as Hamlet and Othello are in the plots of the great dramatist. But it is only a mask, behind which there is no true personal humanity or Divinity. Dorner says no doctrine of the person of Christ can be Christian, which teaches either the identity of the human and divine, the conversion of one into the other, or their commixture.

Turn now from these impracticable theories to the veritable facts in the case — to the human and divine as essentially distinct, and yet related natures. It is evident that there was in Christ one nature purely divine; it is equally evident that there was another as purely human. It is as certain, therefore, by the logic of facts, that there are two natures united in him as that one and one are two.

I cannot better present the union of these natures in Christ than by condensing the statement of it made by the Council at Chalcedon, A.D. 451. "We teach and confess one Lord Jesus Christ, perfect in Deity and perfect in humanity, very God and very man; consisting of reasonable soul and of flesh; of the same substance with the Father as to his Godhead, and of the same substance with us as to his manhood;

in two natures, unmixed, unconverted, undivided. The distinction of natures was never abolished, nor severed into two persons, but the peculiarities of each were preserved and combined into one person, who is the Lord Jesus Christ." This confession has great historic value, notwithstanding the partisan strifes out of and above which it rose. It is the voice of the church, modern and medieval, as well as primitive, and a witness to its doctrinal unity on this central point. It clearly distinguishes the true view from the speculative theories above referred to, and against which the church was early called, and is still called, to defend its faith. The later investigations have unfolded it in a more scientific exactness, and the life-processes of the church have wrought it out into a greater intellectual fulness and ethical richness. But they have introduced no new elements, nor let go either of these old and essential ones.

Are there difficulties in this idea of two natures in one person? There are greater ones in the Nestorian dogma of two natures and two persons, which gives to Christianity two Christs instead of one; and also in the hypothesis of one nature and one person. For if the one nature be the human, as the Socinians say, it leaves us only a finite and fallible Saviour. But if divine, according to the Apollinarians, we have no true God-man as Mediator in Christ, for "a Mediator is not a Mediator of one, but God is one." Difficulties are not, however, proof of error. They are found in some of the most obvious facts and fundamental truths, in the hypostatic union of matter and mind; in the divine existence without beginning, cause, or change, and in omnipotent, creative power. But Christian faith does not stumble at such difficulties; neither does philosophy. The conception of a divine-human Saviour rests for support on history and divine testimony. For the work of mediation, of sacrifice, and salvation by sacrifice, it is perfectly congruous with all we know of the character of God, and the nature and needs of man. Nay, it is the condition and archetype of reconciliation and redemption. It harmonizes justice and love, and is the centre-point of God's regal and paternal administration.

The old Lutheran formula, "the finite is capable of the infinite," contains a first principle of the incarnation and of redemption. Nor is it contradictory to that of the Reformed church — "the finite is incapable of the infinite." It is only the other side of the same great truth. The one looks towards the union of the two natures in Christ; the other, towards their essential distinction. The dualism maintained in the Reformed church preserved its Christology from the ubiquity-dogma, and the communication of attributes which marred the Lutheran, though it came into the peril of a merely mechanical or moral union. On the other hand, the Lutheran coalescence was a reaction from the Romish too great separation, — an extreme of that capability of the finite for the infinite which is indispensable to their union, and which must be maintained. The fall of the human nature did not destroy its substance, or any of its original susceptibility. It did not alter its essential, but only its ethical, relations to God. It is still conscious of dependence on the divine nature, and from a sense of inner discord, of selfschism, and separation from God, it feels the need of a reconciling and redeeming power. This shows it capable of a re-union with God, and of moral harmony with itself.

The finite is not, therefore, an evil — the moral antagonism of the infinite, but a good work of God. In its first form, the human was affiliated with the Divine, leaned upon it, loved it, and lived in the most intimate fellowship with it. It was its perfect picture, marred now, indeed, but not past the restorative power of the Master Artist.

Upon this condition of essential distinction and essential relatedness, the infinite Divine descends and dwells in and with the finite-human in Christ. He who was in the form of God "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." In stooping thus to take up the fallen human nature into the divine-human personality, the Son of God came into the form and condition of a servant. But in this humiliation (*κένωσις*) he did not lay off the divine essence. He did not

empty the Godhead of a single attribute, nor bereave it of a single regal prerogative, nor tarnish a ray of its glory. If the Divine was temporarily veiled, it was also most signally revealed in new lights and new relations.¹ It was seen taking up the whole human into itself, and reconciling it thereto, without making it superhuman, and without violence to its freedom. It was seen giving to the human the whole infinite-divine, completely atoned in Christ, without conversion, diminution, or limitation. The glorious result is the all-sufficient, theanthropic Redeemer, the Head and Representative of the redeemed. In him God is ever the hegeomonic, and ransomed man the free harmonic, answering in his whole nature to the most delicate touches of the Divine, as an unstrung Aeolian, retuned by the fingers of God and swept by his breath sends forth the mingled melodies of earth and heaven.

The key to this incarnating and redeeming work we must look for in the divine love. This is God's ethical nature. "God is love"; and love, like knowledge, is indefinitely communicable. Distribution does not divide, nor imparting, lessen it. It is the vinculum that connects the two natures in Christ; the mysterious bridge across the separating abyss, upon which the Divine passed over to the human in him, — the great unifying force of the moral world. While this love unites the two natures in the person of Christ, it makes the fullest revelation of God, and raises up, and secures a realization of, the true greatness of man. The sensibility and fulness of feminine grace, a feature of Christianity which Romanism recognizes, but mars, in Mariolatry, is blended in Jesus with the grandeur of heroic and perfected manhood. Divinely tender and charitable in his feelings, he was discriminatingly exact in his moral judgments. Profound in his teachings,

¹ " *Se ipsum ezinanivit.* Inanitiō hęc eadem est cum humiliatiōe, de qua postea videbimus. . . . Non potuit quidem Christus abdicare se Divinitate; sed eam ad tempus occultam tenuit, ne appareret sub carnis infirmitate. Itaque gloriam suam non minuendo, sed supprimendo, in conspectu hominum deposuit." — Calvin's Commentary, In Epistolę Pauli ad Philippenses, Cap. ii. 7.

he was simple in his language as a child, while laying the foundations of a universal spiritual empire.

There is a deep mystery in this doctrine of Christ. We cannot explain it, but it harmonizes and explains everything in the life of the God-man, — the two-fold attributes which are ascribed to him, and the mixed elements in his activities, the supernatural in his miracles, and the natural in his human growth. As he increased in stature and wisdom, the fact of God's incarnation in him became more and more manifest to the world, his Messianic character became more complete, and his consciousness of the divinity within him, more distinct and full. Growing thus, thirty years, in a divine-human thoughtfulness and silence, he waited for his work till his strength and his hour were fully come. Then went he forth upon the world's great battle-field, to suffering, death, and to victory.

But as when fire melts iron it permeates every part, yet is not melted, and when heated iron is under the hammer the fire is not hammered, but the hot iron, so in the personal experiences of this conflict, the Divine was in the closest oneness of sympathy and support with the human; but it was not thrown into pangs by the human suffering, with which it was ineffably connected. In the evangelic narrative, hunger and thirst, as well as suffering and death, are affirmed of the divine-human person, but are predicable only of the human. Miracles are also by the same law ascribed to him. He turned water into wine, spake the tempestuous sea into a calm, and raised the dead. But these are the prerogatives and acts only of the divine nature. The attributes and possibilities of the two natures are united in the one personal Mediator without being mixed or commuted. If the finite infirmities of the human appear in the life and death of the mysterious person, so also does the infinite strength of the divine. We say, he was troubled, and so he was; but he was also untroubled as a sea of love. Did he shrink from the cup of vicarious sorrow? And yet, he did not shrink, but drank it all, affirming: "For this cause came

I into the world." God forsakes him, and yet is near and within him. He expires, and is "alive forevermore."

Such, my brethren, is the Christ whom we are called to preach; the faith once delivered to the saints which we are set to defend; not God alone in Christ, nor man, but the completeness of both in his divine-human person, and in the church which is his body. How accordant with infinite wisdom in redemption, that the idea of man, begun in Adam, but cut short of realization by sin, should be thus completed in Christ as the second Adam; that the fallen humanity should find its archetypal at-one-ment with the divinity, in this personal union! How sublime that faith of the church which grasps, as its magnetic centre and Saviour, one who stands in the complete nature of the sinful subject and the righteous Sovereign! How grand, in the march of the ages, the preparation for his advent, and how timely also in the slow but sure haste of providence, when all the philosophies of men and the economies of God had demonstrated the world's great need of him! And the future, too, how bright is it in the power and presence with his church of a risen and reigning Saviour! — bright in the progress of the arts and sciences, of civilization and literature, the tardy though sure followers after the Man of Calvary; bright in the militant hosts on earth, and the countless companies yet to be redeemed; — all, the achievement of the Word made flesh — "the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth!"